

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 00685 171006Z
ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /036 W
-----171024Z 075785 /11

R 170755Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7143
INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL SONGKHLA
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL BRISBANE
AMEMBASSY MANILA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, VS, SN, MY
SUBJECT: WCRP VESSEL ACTIVITIES

REFS: (A) SINGAPORE 0662 (B) BANGKOK 3666 (C) SINGAPORE 0354

1. CONOFF CALLED WCRP SECRETARY GENERAL HOMER JACK TO PROVIDE INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT ASSIST HIM IN CONTACTING THAI PHUOC, OWNER OF LEAP DAL. JACK REPORTED THAT SINCE PREVIOUS TELCON (REFTEL A), HE HAD MET WITH A DUTCH WOMAN WHO HAD VISITED THE LEAP DAL ON FEBRUARY 12 AT THE REQUEST OF THICH NHAT HAN. AT THAT TIME THE BOAT WAS NEAR BANGKOK TAKING ON PROVISIONS AND REPUTEDLY PLANNED TO SAIL SOUTH ON FEBRUARY 12 OR 13 WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF A RENDEZVOUS WITH THE ROLAND NEAR SINGAPORE IN ABOUT 7 DAYS. REFTTEL B INDICATES THERE HAS BEEN SOME DELAY IN THESE PLANS. JACK SAID HE WAS
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TOLD THERE HAD BEEN NO RADIO CONTACT WITH THE LEAP DAL FROM SINGAPORE SINCE THE WEEKEND. THICH NHAT HAN' DUTCH REPRESENTATIVE ALSO NOTED THAT THAI PHUOC WAS IN BANGKOK THE WEEKEND OF FEBRUARY 12-13. JACK NOTED THAT THE LEASE FOR THE LEAP DAL HAD BEEN PAID ONLY THROUGH FEBRUARY 1. THE OWNER MAY THEREFORE BE ANXIOUS FOR THE REFUGEES TO DISEMBARK.

2. JACK SAID UNHCR WAS ATTEMPTING TO MOVE THE 15 REFUGEES ON THE ROLAND ACCEPTED BY AUSTRIA (REFTEL A) ASAP. THE PLAN WAS TO SEND OUT A LAUNCH FOR THE GROUP AND HAVE THEM LEAVE THROUGH SINGAPORE. JACK IS NOT RELUCTANT TO HAVE THE SHIP PROCEED TO KUANTUAN AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED, AS IT WOULD REQUIRE SAILING NORTH, WHICH WCRP FEARS WOULD CAUSE THE REFUGEES TO BELIEVE THEY WERE BEING TAKEN BACK TO VIETNAM. JACK IS WORKING WITH SAMPATKUMAR, UNHCR, TO OBTAIN GOM PERMISSION FOR THE ROLAND TO DOCK IN MALACCA INSTEAD. HE HOPES THIS WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

3. JACK COMMENTED THAT THERE WAS STILL DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THICH NHAT HAN, AND THAT THE LATTER HAD STILL NOT ABANDONED THE IDEA OF HAVING THE ROLAND SAIL TO AUSTRALIA. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH PASCOE, THE AMERICAN CITIZEN OWNER OF THE ROLAND, AND THAT PASCOE HAD AGREED TO TAKE HIS INSTRUCTIONS FROM JACK. PASCOE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE OVERCROWDING AND POSSIBLE UNSEAWORTHINESS OF THE ROLAND, AND JACK BELIEVED HE WOULD ACT IN GOOD FAITH. FURTHERMORE, JACK PREVIOUSLY ADVISED DCM THAT HE HELD THE PURSE STRING.

4. JACK SAID THICH NHAT HAN HAS BEEN REFUSED FURTHER VISA EXTENSIONS BY SINGAPORE IMMIGRATION AND WILL HAVE TO LEAVE DURING CHINESE NEW YEAR (FEB. 18-19. SINCE HE HAS NO MALAYSIAN VISA, JACK BELIEVES HE WILL MOST LIKELY GO TO BANGKOK. SISTER CAO NGOC THUONG (REFTEL C, PARA 4), HOWEVER, WILL PROBABLY REMAIN IN SINGAPORE. JACK EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THESE TWO MIGHT BE TRYING TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONTINUED CONTROL OF THE SHIPS WITHOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE.

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5. IN LATEST TELCON CONOFF CONVEYED APPRECIATION OF USG FOR JACK'S EFFORTS TO WORK WITH UNHCR FOR A RESPONSIBLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF RESETTLING THE REFUGEES ABOARD THE WCRP VESSELS.

GRANT

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